Is art the language of emotion?

Yes I believe it is the language of emotion. Looking back on our class’ previous definitions of art it is clear to see that two themes keep popping back up and that is communication and expression of emotion, communication being something that a “language” is needed for and emotion being a universally humane thing (something all humans have). Keeping this in mind then in order for art to express or communicate an emotion it must be a universal language of sorts. When art is created, the artist is creating something they feel, think or know about and when art is viewed it invokes knowledge, feelings or a thought so my theory is that art can either transmit emotion, thought or knowledge or it can be interpreted into thoughts, emotion or knowledge. When I say “transmit” I mean that the emotion/thought/knowledge the artist is expressing is directly transferred to the viewer e.g. if a painter paints a piece of art while he is angry with something and the viewer sees the art and then becomes angry with the same thing the artist was angry with (or has negative views of that thing). And when I say “interpreted” I mean that emotion/thought/knowledge the artist expressed is understood by the viewer and is used to further their understanding.

To what extent do the arts help us to see the world with new eyes?

Art could be considered an individual’s expression of emotion/thought/knowledge and could as such be considered a way to view how someone else perceives the subject that they are expressing in their art, in this sense it gives a way to understand and consider a view we may not have had before. It is in this vein that we can follow Aristotle’s way of thinking and art can become catharsis, meaning it allows us to see how a certain scenario plays out in order for us to learn from it and when we do learn from it, it allows us to see the world differently. For example in a play or movie a character loses his temper and yell at his/her best friend up subsequently losing that friends trust and friendship, we see what happens when a friend makes you lose your temper however unless we want that result to happen we learn not to yell at them, this makes us realise the value of our friends and see the world slightly differently. However there is a possibility that a piece of art has the same emotion/thought/knowledge that we already have in which case it doesn’t broaden any understanding and instead serves to reinforce our views.

Bibliography:

* <http://www.markedbyteachers.com/international-baccalaureate/theory-of-knowledge/tok-essay-2009-we-see-the-world-not-as-it-is-but-as-who-we-are.html>